IN THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Previously Presented) An overload control method for use in a multi-branch Internet Protocol-based private branch exchange system within a network environment

5   having a primary network and at least one alternate network, said method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a congestion indicator status associated with each path in said primary network, said congestion indicator status indicating whether said path is congested and based on congestion data from at least one device that participated in a packet telephony

10   communication;

receiving a call set up request from a source terminal;

determining if a primary path between said source terminal and a destination terminal is congested using said congestion indicator status;

routing said call using said at least one alternate network if said primary path

15   between said source terminal and a destination terminal is congested; and

setting a timer that will cause said congestion indicator flag to automatically expire after a predefined period of time, wherein said timer expires after a period of time within which said congestion is expected to be alleviated.

20   2.   (Cancelled)

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Previously Presented) A congestion management method for use in an

25   Internet Protocol-based private branch exchange system within a packet network environment, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving congestion data from at least one device that participated in a packet telephony communication;

determining if said congestion data indicates that a path associated with said

30   packet telephony communication is congested;

setting a congestion indicator flag associated with said path if said congestion

data indicates that a path associated with said packet telephony communication is congested; and

      setting a timer that will cause said congestion indicator flag to automatically expire after a predefined period of time, wherein said timer expires after a period of time

5   within which said congestion is expected to be alleviated.

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Cancelled)

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7.   (Currently Amended) A congestion management method for use by a packet phone adapter in a packet network environment, said method comprising the steps of:

      collecting congestion data associated with a packet telephony communication;

      determining if said packet telephony communication had a duration that

15   exceeded a predefined threshold;

      reporting said congestion data to a centralized server that performs overload control, whereby said centralized server evaluates said congestion data to determine if a path associated with said packet telephony communication is congested; and

      setting a timer that will cause said <u>determined</u> congestion <u>status</u> ~~indicator flag~~

20   to automatically expire after a predefined period of time, wherein said timer expires after a period of time within which said congestion is expected to be alleviated.

8.   (Cancelled)

25   9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Previously Presented) A congestion manager for use in an Internet Protocol-based private branch exchange system within a packet network environment, comprising:

      a memory for storing computer readable code; and

30   a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

      receive congestion data from at least one device that participated in a packet

telephony communication;

determine if said congestion data indicates that a path associated with said packet telephony communication is congested;

set a congestion indicator flag associated with said path if said congestion

5   data indicates that a path associated with said packet telephony communication is congested; and

maintain a timer that will cause said congestion indicator flag to automatically expire after a predefined period of time, wherein said timer expires after a period of time within which said congestion is expected to be alleviated.

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11.   (Cancelled)

12.   (Cancelled)